The NLM recognizes that convergence of literacy programmes with the programmes of other development departments is essential for the socio-economic upliftment of the beneficiaries.

(c) to (e) At present, the combined efforts of Sarva Shiksha Abhiyan (SSA) and National Literacy Mission (NLM) aim at providing basic education to all persons in the 6-14 age-group and 15-35 age-group respectively. The goal of SSA is to universalize elementary education in the country. One of the main objectives of SSA is to bridge all gender and social category gaps at primary stage by 2007 and at elementary level by 2010. National Programme for Education of Girls at Elementary Level (NPEGEL) provides focused strategies for girls in educationally backward blocks. Kasturba Gandhi Balika Vidyalayas are also provided in 1954 blocks aiming to provide residential facilities mainly for SC/ST/OBCs and girls belonging to minority communities to complete elementary education.

The NLM seeks to impart functional literacy to adult illiterates by providing basic literacy under the Total Literacy Campaigns, followed by Post Literacy Programme for reinforcement of literacy skills to the neo-literates and continuing education programme for providing opportunities for life-long education. So far, 597 districts in the country have been covered by the literacy programmes. Women learners constitute over 60% of the enrolment.

It is envisaged that these efforts will be continued during the next Plan with a greater focus on reducing the gender gap. The Approach Paper to the Eleventh Five Year Plan envisages increase in the literacy rate to 85%, substantial reduction in the drop-out rate of school children and in the gender gap by the end of the Plan period

Making AICTE helpful to applicants

8. SHRI S.M. LALJAN BASHA: Will the Minister of HUMAN RESOURCE DEVELOPMENT be pleased to state:

(a) whether any steps are proposed to make the AICTE open and helpful to all applicants for various approvals;

(b) whether it is a fact that there is a communication gap generally between the AICTE and applicant institutions;

(c) what steps Government would initiate to make the AICTE

administratively strong so as to become accessible and open with all institutes having technical courses; and

(d) the steps proposed in this regard?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF HUMAN RESOURCE DEVELOPMENT (SHRIMATI D. PURANDESWARI): (a) to (d) According to the All India Council for Technical Education (AICTE), it is continuously striving to make it open and helpful to all the applicants for various approvals. The communication of all the decisions regarding approval has been made time bound. To ensure maintenance of Norms and Standards, random and surprise visits are made by the AICTE. The institutes are advised to present their cases and are being heard at the highest level.

All the information regarding Approval Process Handbook, Appplication Forms, Public Notices, Latest Policies, Procedures, Decisions of the Council are available at the Information Facilitation Centers at AICTE Headquarters and its Regional Offices as well as the AICTE website (www.aicte.ernet.in). The Council is introducing transparency by introduction of "compliance report" and"Mandatory Disclosure" for institutions. Approval Process has been made open ended with no cut off dates. AICTE has created a facility, as e-mail on their website, called Student Voice wherein students can complain about non availability of facilities or any rule of Council being violated or any suggestion in policy or procedure to improve the Technical Education system.

IIT in Orissa

9. SHRI B.J. PANDA:
MS. PRAMILA BOHIDAR:

Will the Minister of HUMAN RESOURCE DEVELOPMENT be pleased to state:

(a) whether the Minister of State for HRD has announced in Patna that one IIT will be set up in Orissa State ;

(b) whether the IIT for Orissa State is now proposed to be shifted to some other States;

(c) if so, the details with reason thereof;

(d) whether the Chief Minister of Orissa has written to the